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young to obtain much previous schooling. He considers this condition to have been a not unmixed evil, as the good men came to the front naturally and the poorer ones dropped out. There is nothing in Davis's letters to indicate that he himself held these views. The idea is that the present "shallow and illiberal scheme" at the Naval Academy attaches too much importance to theory at the expense of practice. If this condition really exists, it can be corrected instantly by counting proficiency in drills and practical work as of equal value with theoretical study, which is not now the custom.

Captain Davis has made an interesting addition to naval literature. His own personality is kept well in the background, and in his allusions to his father there is less eulogy apparent than might easily spring from a son's pardonable pride in the career of a distinguished father.

ROY C. SMITH.

*Letters and Recollections of John Murray Forbes.* Edited by his Daughter, SARAH FORBES HUGHES. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1899. Two vols., pp. ix, 351; vii, 264.)

Now that most of the great generals of the Civil War—and some of the smaller ones—have had their lives written, it is quite time to give to the public the memoirs of some of those great civilians who, without public office or personal fame, not merely provided for the nation the financial sinews of war but also much of the sense, the discretion and the patience which made its prolongation possible. No one of these was more valuable to his country from the outset than John Murray Forbes, of Boston. He was present at the very beginning, to take part in that wise divergence of the Northern troops through Annapolis which really saved Washington, a measure which originated with a plain railway superintendent and was opposed strongly by General Butler, although he characteristically claimed the credit of it when it succeeded. Forbes was practically, in his own phrase, "Secretary of the Navy for Massachusetts," at the outset, purchasing provisions and drawing on his own nautical experience for the instruction of captains. He was one of the half-dozen men who organized the great Sanitary Commission and sustained it. He vibrated between Boston, New York and Washington, always bracing up the financial side of the war and steadfastly keeping his own name out of print. He organized the New England Loyal Publication Society, of which he was president. He heartily sustained General Hunter's early efforts to enlist colored troops, long before Governor Andrew was permitted to undertake it. He was sent to England by the Secretaries of State and of the Navy with authority to arrange a loan of a million sterling on the security of twenty million dollars in five-twenty bonds, and, by his courage and fidelity, carried through ultimately his purpose, although at first sight it appeared a failure. He spent two years of the war in Washington with his family, expressly to retain his opportunity of usefulness, and was always the same keen, fearless, influential adviser.

When peace came, he put his great energy into railroad building and in his hands the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Company grew from a mere feeder of the Michigan Central, 150 miles long, into the vast organization of to-day operating over seven thousand miles of railroad. Judge Hoar said that in the Civil War John Forbes "did more for his country than any other private citizen and we owed our success as much to him as to any other man"; and unlike many men who had distinguished themselves in the war, he at once turned to the works of peace and was almost equally useful there.

The descendant of an old Highland clan whom he himself dismissed as "probably a set of old cattle thieves," he had an intense family feeling and exercised a responsibility for all his kindred to the sixth generation. His mother being a Perkins, he shared the great prosperity of the Boston commercial house of that name, went from Round Hill School to their counting-room in Boston, swept out the store as youngest clerk, and was sent at seventeen to Canton, consigned to Mr. J. P. Cushing, his cousin, who had been twenty-five years in China and was returning home with a fortune—the first of the long line of Boston millionaires. "You know," young Forbes writes of Mr. Cushing, "that we have always looked upon him as many degrees higher than the Pope in all his glory, and I expected to feel a proportionate degree of awe in his presence" (I. 57). This was an amusing tribute to one of the simplest of men, who used to say that the chief advantage of his fortune was that he could wear old shoes. Returning home for a time, Forbes was married before he was twenty-one, and was soon sent out to China again. It is amusing to find him writing to his brother in 1836 cautioning him above all things not to invest some little savings in railroads, on the ground that they would prove a failure. He writes "I have good reasons to believe, from all I can learn of the English railways, that ours will prove a failure after the first few years; the wear and tear proves ruinous. At any rate keep clear of them" (I. 81). This from one who was subsequently among the railway kings of the country is sufficiently instructive.

His life-long anti-slavery feeling was due, as in the case of many others, to the murder of Lovejoy. He was present at the Faneuil Hall meeting and heard Wendell Phillips's famous speech. "I had never before heard his name, and few people outside of his class in college knew him as a man of talent. Up to that time I had been neutral or indifferent on the subject of slavery. That speech changed my whole feeling with regard to it, though the bigotry and pig-headedness of the abolitionists prevented my acting with them" (I. 100). Twenty-five years later, during the war, he wrote in somewhat similar strain to Mr. C. B. Sedgwick, who had just made an emancipation speech in Congress. "Treble conservative as I am, I sometimes get so disgusted with the timidity and folly of our moderate Republicans that I should go in and join the abolitionists if these last were not so arbitrary and illiberal that no man of independence can live in the house with them" (I. 317). This treble conservative attitude was the sort of self-delusion with which many

worthy men consoled themselves for their own radical action. It did not prevent him from being a persistent advocate of free trade (II. 222) and of woman suffrage (II. 205) or from bolting permanently from the Republican party on the nomination of Blaine.

Nothing can be more delightful than the daughter's account of his life amid the leisure of later years, especially in his summer home at the Island of Naushon. Mr. Emerson says of him there "Mr. Forbes at Naushon is the only 'squire' in Massachusetts, and no nobleman ever understood or performed his duties better . . . How little this man suspects, with his sympathy for men and his respect for lettered and scientific people, that he is not likely ever to meet a man who is superior to himself" (II. 111, 112). The whole book is admirably edited and written, with the simple affection of a daughter and in what Macaulay calls "clear woman's English."

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON.

*The End of an Era.* By JOHN S. WISE. (Boston and New York : Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1899. Pp. 463.)

THE era of whose end Mr. Wise writes is the life and thought which characterized Virginia and a part of the South, before the Civil War. When its end came in 1865, he was only a boy of eighteen. But, his father being a prominent man, he had excellent advantages for observation then ; while information and thought of later years have evidently added much. The student of American history will not dwell long on this book, but will get from it, besides entertainment, several instructive pictures of the old régime in Virginia and of the hard struggle of the Confederacy. Touching is its record, for instance, of the part of the conscientious mistress of a small plantation. Sick or worthless servants could not be given over to a hospital or be discharged ; she had burdens of care which were unknown where service was free. But that close tie between master and servant which the author saw in his own home, he did not find carried out on extensive plantations. A very striking picture is given of a slave-auction in Richmond from which, as a "night-mare," he went home "sick at heart." That slavery is gone he thanks God—"it was a curse, and nobody knows better than I the terrible abuses which were possible and actual under the system." He is equally frank about duelling (and one of his brothers, in defence of his father's reputation, fought eight duels in two years)—how absurd, he says, how utterly Quixotic it was as a way of settling personal differences ! Another good picture is given of society life which centered in Richmond. We see how, while the favored class had many opportunities, conditions in society as a whole were far from democratic. Mr. Wise states fairly the position of the overwhelming majority of Virginians in 1861. They did not wish either war or disunion ; but, taught to believe that the claim of a state on its citizens came before any claim of the general government, they had to answer the question, when Carolina fired on Sumter and federal troops were called out, on which side they should fight ! The